

2nd March 1925]

[Mr. R. A. Graham]

"I take it that there is not much complaint about the policy laid down in G.O. No. 658. The complaint is that the visible results have not been sufficient. It must be admitted that the results in some offices and districts have been quite appreciable. As a means of correcting the tendencies of individual patronage, pending the formation of a Public Services Commission, we have constituted the Staff Selection Board which has come in for a great deal of unmerited obloquy, partly because hon. Members do not understand the object of it. The Staff Selection Board does not make appointments. When it was constituted it was instructed to bear in mind the principles laid down in the G.O. No. 658. I have every reason to believe that it has done so. Its function is to make selection from the applicants for Government service so as to ensure that only fit men shall be appointed. It is not part of its duty to see that no Brahman is admitted in the services, nor is that laid down as the duty of any authority. The actual appointing authorities have not been changed; they too are bound by the terms of the Government Order. Where the Staff Selection Board operates, the choice of the appointing authority is limited to the applicants selected by that Board. Unfortunately it has not been possible to extend the operations of the Board all over the Presidency. It has as much as it can to do at present with appointments at headquarters. In the Staff Selection Board lies the answer to the complaint that no member of the depressed classes or other unrepresented classes can now obtain employment in Government service, because owing to local influence his application is always turned down on the ground that he is incompetent. Any person can make his application to the Staff Selection Board. The Board will then satisfy itself whether he is competent and fit to be taken into Government service. If he is, it will include him in its list. And if the appointing authorities still refuse to take him in, then there is reason for complaint against them."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REODI:—"May I know whether the Board recommends for all grades of appointments?"

* The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM:—"It does not at present. As I stated, its activities are at present confined to the Madras City. My hon. Colleague informs me that it covers appointments in the Police department all over the Presidency."

Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR:—"May I ask one question, Sir? Suppose there are hundred applications before the Staff Selection Board from men of all communities and amongst these there are members of the depressed classes who are qualified persons, persons who have passed the B.A. Degree Examination and these persons are selected by the Board along with those of other communities with perhaps B.A. (Hons.) degrees, I want to know whether a chance is given to the men from the depressed classes or educationally backward classes by reason of the Staff Selection Board? Or does the Board merely submit to the Government or the appointing authority a list of all the names and they choose ten or fifteen persons who are most competent. Is a chance also given to the members of the depressed classes or educationally backward communities?"

* The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM:—"Unhesitatingly I say, yes.

"The Staff Selection Board makes its selections in such a way as to bring forward all members of backward communities who are fit for Government service at all. Of course it would not select or recommend a man with